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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was (1) to identify certain career guidance needs of high school vocational education students that would normally be expected to be served by a school's career guidance program, (2) to determine the extent to which these needs were being met in Texas public schools, and (3) to determine the relationship between school size and the services utilized to meet these needs. The study was limited to a vocational agriculture program--pre-employment laboratory program in farm machinery service and repair. A literature review revealed ten identifiable needs. Mailed questionnaires were used to gather data on 383 students from teachers of the course. (Data are presented tabularly.) Eighteen major findings indicate that few students were influenced by others, by testing, or by experience to take the course. Half or more received guidance on job search or sources of further training. The mean weighted rating given by students as to how helpful the school had been in aiding them in choosing a career was slightly above the midpoint between "some help" and "almost no help." In general, no relationship existed between school size and career guidance services utilized. Eight implications have been drawn up. (MS)

ED 085492

# AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMS OF SELECTED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN TEXAS

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# FOREWORD

Guidance is not a new concept in education. Teachers have historically guided students in the direction of socially approved modes of behavior. Guidance, however, as a part of the teachers work has consisted, for the most part, in pointing out what was "right" and urging its acceptance.

The origin of vocational guidance as an educational activity is generally credited to Frank Parsons, who described the field as embracing three broad factors: (1) clear understanding of self, (2) knowledge of the requirements and conditions for success in different lines of work, and (3) true reasoning about the relationships between these two groups of facts. These three factors were considered sound for many years and served as the foundation of the process by which guidance personnel assisted persons to choose an occupation or career, prepare for it, enter upon it and progress in it.

In recent years, however, Super (1951) suggested that vocational guidance be considered "the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and of his role in the world of work, to test this concept against reality, and to convert it into a reality, with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society."

The term career guidance was used in this study rather than vocational guidance. No attempt was made, however, to distinguish between the two terms. From the standpoint of the practitioner there is probably little difference because the goal of the process is to help persons make wise decisions about their roles in the world of work.

It is hoped this study will help educators understand the nature and extent of the guidance activities in which students participate. The challenge is great; the need for effective programs is paramount in education.

Earl S. Webb, Professor
December, 1972

# An Assessment of the Career Guidance Programs of Selected Public Schools in Texas

## Introduction

Few would deny the need for continued improvement and expansion of vocational-technical education programs in the public schools of our nation. Recent reports indicate that although much progress has been made in the growth of such programs, a wide gap still exists between what is and what should be, if we expect to meet the labor market needs of our nation in future years.

However, providing an expanded program of vocational education in our schools is not enough in itself. The development of high quality vocational-technical education programs will fall short of expected outcomes unless they are undergirded by high quality, planned, systematic career guidance programs. The two must go hand-in-hand. Sound career guidance programs are essential which will enable students to discover their strengths and weaknesses, to choose realistic goals in line with their interests and capacities, and to choose wisely the educational experiences most appropriate in preparing them for the future. Such programs must assist students in making the transition from school to work, from school to school, and from work back to school for additional preparation and training.

In spite of this pressing need, it is generally accepted that most public schools have done an inadequate job of providing effective career guidance programs for their students. The Sixth Report of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, entitled Counseling and Guidance - A Call for Change points out the failure of our schools in this important area. James Rhodes, in his book, Vocational Education and Guidance: A System for the Seventies, states: "The vocational guidance program in the public school has been a failure. It has not provided youth with the understanding of the economic society in which they find themselves, nor encouraged them to follow an educational program which would enable them to compete in such a society." Many others have spoken out similarly about the school's failure to meet the career guidance needs of the majority of its students.

However, while much of the recent literature stresses the inadequacies of career guidance programs, the extent to which such programs in the schools are presently meeting the career needs of students is not clearly known. It seems imperative that this question be answered in order to give direction to the planning and implementation of career guidance programs. In an attempt to partially answer this question, this study was conducted. It was an attempt to assess the extent to which certain career guidance needs of a select group of vocational education students in Texas were being met through the public schools.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which certain career guidance needs of students enrolled in a specific vocational education program in Texas were being met through the public schools. The following specific objectives were identified to guide the direction of the study.

1. To identify certain career guidance needs of high school vocational education students that would normally be expected to be served by a school's career guidance program.

2. To determine the extent to which certain career guidance needs of students enrolled in a specific vocational education program in Texas were being met through the public schools.

3. To determine the relationship between school size (number of students enrolled in grades 9-12) and the services being utilized in meeting the career guidance needs of students.

## Procedure

The study was limited to schools in Texas offering a specific vocational education program - the Pre-employment Laboratory Program in Farm Machinery Service and Repair (Vocational Agriculture). Students enrolled in this program were identified as the target group to survey regarding the extent to which certain of their career guidance needs were being met.

A review of literature was utilized to identify some of the important career guidance needs of high school vocational education students. Those needs that would normally be expected to be served by a school's career guidance program became the framework for the development of a survey instrument. The needs identified were as follows:

1. Need for information concerning vocational education courses offered in the school.
2. Need for interest and aptitude tests to assist in choosing careers and in selecting appropriate courses of study.
3. Need for counseling to assist in test interpretation and in choosing appropriate careers.
4. Need for work experiences.
5. Need for occupational information through various sources and types of media.
6. Need for educational information concerning opportunities for training beyond high school.
7. Need for on-site observation of business and industry.
8. Need for information and instructions on how to interview for a job.
9. Need for information and instructions on how to write letters of application for a job.
10. Need for assistance in making definite plans beyond high school in accordance with career goals.

The writers in no way imply that this list is exhaustive of the career guidance needs of high school students, but merely a sampling of what they believed to be some of the more important needs, and ones that the school would normally be expected to serve.

The initial effort in obtaining the data was a letter sent to each teacher of a Pre-employment Laboratory Program in Farm Machinery Service and Repair. The letter explained the nature of the project and solicited assistance. Teachers who agreed to help with the project were asked to return a postal card indicating their willingness to help and the number of students enrolled in their

classes. To help them make a decision as to whether they wished to participate, a copy of the survey instrument was included with the letter.

Upon receipt of the postal cards from teachers, the proper number of questionnaires were sent with instructions for their administration and return.

The data were processed by hand and appropriate descriptive statistics were used to report the responses of the students.

## Presentation of Data

Data for the most part are presented in tables with a breakdown according to school size (number of students enrolled in grades 9-12) where size of school would generally reflect the resources available for conducting a program of career guidance. It should be pointed out, however, that the number of students enrolled in high school is only an indication of the size of the community in which the school is located. No attempt was made in the research to determine the relationship between high school enrollment and community resources. A distribution, however, of responses among the school sizes selected for comparison probably indicates a rather wide variation in resources available for career guidance programs. Differences would be extensive between small isolated rural schools and those located in urban communities.

### Distribution of Respondents by Grade in School and by Age

The Texas Education Agency policy states that only students in grades 11-12 are eligible for enrollment in the pre-employment laboratory program in farm machinery service and repair. It may be observed, however, from Table 1 that three students were in grade nine and eight in grade 10. This number represents 2.9 percent. The majority, 65.3 percent, were in grade 12.

It is not known why the 11 ninth and tenth grade students were enrolled in the program. It is highly probable, however, that they were students who were not interested in pursuing an academic program and would likely drop out of school if such a vocational program were not available to prepare them for employment. Many students who are over age for their grade will stay in school only for the purpose of learning a trade. A review of age distributions, as shown in Table 2, lends support to this thesis because the mean age was found to be 17.8—a little higher than would normally be expected. It may be observed that 16 or four percent were 20 years old while 15.3 percent were 19 years of age. It may be that some of the 11 students enrolled in grades 9 and 10 were over age for their grades.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Grade in School.

| Grade | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Nine | 3 | 0.8 |
| Ten | 8 | 2.1 |
| Eleven | 122 | 31.8 |
| Twelve | 250 | 65.3 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Age.

| Age | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | 2 | 0.6 |
| 16 | 24 | 6.3 |
| 17 | 116 | 30.4 |
| 18 | 166 | 43.4 |
| 19 | 59 | 15.3 |
| 20 | 16 | 4.0 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |
| Mean Age 17.8 | | |

Years Enrolled in Program

The number of years of instruction in the pre-employment laboratory program in farm machinery service and repair varies among schools from one to two years. It may be observed from Table 3 that 345 or 90 percent of the students responding had been enrolled for only one year. It is not known whether the schools offered more than one year or if students elected to take one year only.

Table 3. Number of Years Respondents were Enrolled in the Pre-employment Laboratory Program in Farm Machinery Service and Repair.

| Years | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| One | 345 | 90.0 |
| Two | 38 | 10.0 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Person Who Influenced Students to Enroll in Program

Three hundred eighty-three students responded to this item, and of these, 218 or 56.8 percent, as shown in Table 4, indicated that no one in particular influenced them to enroll in the program. Fellow students, however, were the most influential persons with the teacher of the course a close second. It is evident that other school personnel, specifically the principal and counselor, were not identified by respondents as having a great deal of influence on their decision to select the course as a part of their school program.

Table 4. Person Who Influenced Respondents to Enroll in Pre-employment Laboratory Program in Farm Machinery Service and Repair.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| No one in particular | 218 | 56.8 |
| Fellow students | 50 | 12.8 |
| Teacher of the course | 46 | 12.0 |
| Father | 21 | 5.6 |
| Principal | 16 | 4.3 |
| Counselor | 12 | 3.2 |
| Mechanic | 9 | 2.4 |
| Mother | 1 | 0.2 |
| Other | 10 | 2.7 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

## Aptitude Testing of Students

In response to the question, "Have you taken any tests to help you determine your interest in or aptitude for doing mechanical work?" only 132 or 34.5 percent of the 383 students responding indicated that they had taken such tests, as shown in Table 5a. It may be observed from Table 5b, however, that of the 132 who had taken tests, only 55 had had anyone counsel with them about their test scores. If it can be assumed that counseling is an essential part of testing, only 55 or 14.5 percent of the 383 respondents derived benefits from testing.

Of the 55 respondents who indicated they had had counseling, 29 or 52.7 percent identified the counselor as the person who had counseled with them, as shown in Table 5c. The teacher was identified in 25.5 percent of the cases, and the 12 classified under "other" identified such persons as parent, principal, or Air Force, Navy and Army personnel.

Table 5a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Taken Interest or Aptitude Tests for Doing Mechanical Work.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 132 | 34.5 |
| No | 251 | 65.5 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 5b. Number and Percent of Those Taking Tests Who Engaged in Counseling About Test Scores.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 55 | 41.7 |
| No | 77 | 58.3 |
| Total | 132 | 100.0 |

Table 5c. Person Counseling With Respondents.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Counselor | 29 | 52.7 |
| Teacher | 14 | 25.5 |
| Other | 12 | 21.8 |
| Total | 55 | 100.0 |

It might be expected that larger schools would be more likely to have vocational testing programs than smaller schools; however, an examination of Table 5d shows there was little difference. While the smallest percentage of students who took interest or aptitude tests were in the smallest schools, the difference is not large. Table 5e shows that those in the smallest schools who took tests had the least counseling about these scores.

Table 5d. Number and Percent of Respondents Taking Interest or Aptitude Tests for Doing Mechanical Work by School Size.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 36 | 30.5 | 48 | 39.3 | 48 | 36.1 | 132 | 35.4 |
| No | 85 | 69.5 | 77 | 60.7 | 89 | 63.9 | 251 | 64.6 |
| Total | 121 | 100.0 | 125 | 100.0 | 137 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 5e. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Counseling About Test Scores by School Size.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 14 | 38.9 | 24 | 50.0 | 17 | 35.4 | 55 | 41.7 |
| No | 22 | 61.1 | 24 | 50.0 | 31 | 64.6 | 77 | 58.3 |
| Total | 36 | 100.0 | 48 | 100.0 | 48 | 100.0 | 132 | 100.0 |

Experience as Mechanic or Mechanic's Helper

In response to the question, "Have you had or do you now have a part-time job as a mechanic or as a mechanic's helper?" only 61 or 16 percent responded affirmatively, as shown in Table 6a. Of the 61 who had worked on a part-time job, 41 percent identified parents as the person who helped them become employed, followed by "self" and "teacher" in 25.0 and 13.6 percent of the cases, respectively. The counselor was identified by only one student as the person who helped him obtain a job. In the "other" category, businessmen and relatives were identified.

Table 6a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Worked Part-time as a Mechanic or Mechanic's Helper.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 61 | 16.0 |
| No | 322 | 84.0 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 6b. Person Who Helped Respondents Obtain Part-time Jobs as a Mechanic or as a Mechanic's Helper.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Parent | 25 | 41.0 |
| Self | 15 | 25.0 |
| Teacher | 8 | 13.6 |
| Counselor | 1 | 2.2 |
| Other | 12 | 18.2 |
| Total | 61 | 100.0 |

Only 56 or 14.6 percent had worked full-time during the summer as a mechanic or mechanic's helper, as shown in Table 7a. Of these, parents were identified in 41.3 percent of the cases as the persons who had helped them obtain the job. "Self" and "mechanic" were identified in 15.2 and 10.9 percent of the cases, respectively. Only seven of the 56 gave credit to school personnel for helping them obtain summer employment as a mechanic or mechanic's helper.

Table 7a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Worked Full-time During the Summer as a Mechanic or as a Mechanic's Helper.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 56 | 14.6 |
| No | 327 | 85.4 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 7b. Person Who Helped Respondents Obtain Summer Employment as a Mechanic or as a Mechanic's Helper.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Parent | 23 | 41.3 |
| Self | 9 | 15.2 |
| Mechanic | 6 | 10.9 |
| Teacher | 5 | 8.7 |
| Counselor | 2 | 4.3 |
| Other | 11 | 19.6 |
| Total | 56 | 100.0 |

Information Provided About the Mechanics Trade

In response to the question, "Have you read any books, bulletins or other literature that provided you with information about the mechanics trade?" 212 or 55.4 percent stated they had, as shown in Table 8a. The main person identified by respondents as providing this source of information was "teacher" in 47.5 percent of the cases. "Self" was the second source identified by 51 or 24 percent. Other persons identified were counselors, trade school representatives, and mechanics in 9.8, 6.9 and 3.5 percent of the cases, respectively, as shown in Table 8b. In the "other" category, library, Army and principal were identified as persons or sources of literature that provided information about the mechanics trade.

Table 8a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Read Books, Bulletins or Other Literature that Provided Information about the Mechanics Trade.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 212 | 55.4 |
| No | 171 | 44.6 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Little difference is shown in Table 8c when school size was considered in the percentage of students that had read about the mechanics trade. The percentage was slightly lower for the group from the smallest schools. The highest, by a few percentage points, was in the 250-500 size school.

Table 8b. Persons Providing Respondents with Books, Bulletins or Other Literature about the Mechanics Trade.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher | 101 | 47.5 |
| Self | 51 | 24.0 |
| Counselor | 21 | 9.8 |
| Trade school representative | 15 | 6.9 |
| Mechanic | 7 | 3.5 |
| Other | 17 | 8.3 |
| Total | 212 | 100.0 |

Table 8c. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Read Books, Bulletins or Other Liberature that Provided Information about the Mechanics Trade by School Size.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 62 | 51.2 | 74 | 59.2 | 76 | 55.5 | 212 | 55.4 |
| No | 59 | 48.8 | 51 | 40.8 | 61 | 44.5 | 171 | 44.6 |
| Total | 121 | 100.0 | 125 | 100.0 | 137 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Less than half, 44.4 percent, as shown in Table 9a, had viewed motion pictures, filmstrips or other visuals that would help them understand opportunities in the mechanics trade. Of those that had viewed such visuals, the teacher was identified as the person responsible in almost 80 percent of the cases, as shown in Table 9b. Others identified included trade school representative, 9.6 percent, counselor 7.2 percent, and businessman, 3.0 percent.

Table 9a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Viewed Motion Pictures, Filmstrips or Other Types of Visuals that Would Help Them Understand Opportunities Available in the Mechanics Trade.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 170 | 44.4 |
| No | 213 | 55.6 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 9b. Persons Providing Motion Picture Films, Filmstrips or Other Types of Visuals to Help Respondents Understand Opportunities Available in the Mechanics Trade.

| Persons | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher | 135 | 79.6 |
| Trade school representative | 17 | 9.6 |
| Counselor | 12 | 7.2 |
| Businessman | 5 | 3.0 |
| Friend | 1 | 0.6 |
| Total | 170 | 100.0 |

When school size was considered, it may be observed in Table 9c that the percentage of students who had viewed visuals to help them understand the mechanics trade was the lowest in the smallest schools. A somewhat higher percentage is shown in the 250-500 school size with the highest in the 500 and up school size.

Table 9c. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Viewed Motion Pictures, Filmstrips or Other Types of Visuals that Would Help Them Understand Opportunities Available in the Mechanics Trade by School Size.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 48 | 39.7 | 59 | 46.1 | 63 | 47.0 | 170 | 44.4 |
| No | 73 | 60.3 | 69 | 53.9 | 71 | 53.0 | 213 | 55.6 |
| Total | 121 | 100.0 | 128 | 100.0 | 134 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Participation in Class Where Employer Discussed What is Expected of Employees

In response to the question, "Have you been in a class where employers discussed such matters as what employers expect of employees?" Table 10a shows that only 109 or 28.5 percent responded in the affirmative. The class most frequently identified as sponsoring such discussions was the pre-employment laboratory class, in 81.4 percent of the cases, as shown in Table 10b. In the "other" category, a business class was mentioned by a few students. It must be kept in mind, however, that only 28.5 percent of the 383 students had benefit of such a discussion by employers.

Table 10a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Been in a Class Where Employers Discussed What is Expected of Employees.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 109 | 28.5 |
| No | 274 | 71.5 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 10b. Class in Which Employers Discussed What is Expected of Employees.

| Class | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-employment lab class | 89 | 81.4 |
| Career day | 2 | 2.1 |
| Counselor | 1 | 1.0 |
| Other | 17 | 15.5 |
| Total | 109 | 100.0 |

When school size was considered there was an increase in percentage as school size increased, as shown in Table 10c. This increase, no doubt, is related to the availability of resource personnel in the school community.

Table 10c. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Been in a Class Where Employers Discussed What is Expected of Employees by School Size.

| Response | School Size: Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 30 | 24.6 | 36 | 27.9 | 43 | 32.6 | 109 | 28.4 |
| No | 92 | 75.4 | 93 | 72.1 | 89 | 67.4 | 274 | 71.6 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 129 | 100.0 | 132 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Field Trips to Businesses

In response to the question, "Have you been in a class that took a field trip to a business for the purpose of helping you make a career choice?" 126 or 32.9 percent, as shown in Table 11a, responded affirmatively. This left slightly more than two-thirds that had never taken such a trip.

Table 11a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Taken a Field Trip to a Business for the Purpose of Helping Them Make Career Choices.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 126 | 32.9 |
| No | 257 | 67.1 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

The pre-employment laboratory class was the only one that was identified specifically by respondents as having sponsored such a trip, as shown in Table 11b. Some just wrote in the word "teacher" which probably means that a teacher may have conducted field trips independently of a formal class. In the "other" category such persons as "father," "uncle," and "friend" were mentioned.

Table 11b. Class in Which Respondents Were Enrolled That Took a Field Trip to a Business for the Purpose of Helping Students Make Career Choices.

| Class | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-employment lab class | 88 | 69.7 |
| Teacher | 11 | 8.4 |
| Other | 27 | 21.9 |
| Total | 126 | 100.0 |

Visits With Shop Manager or Mechanic

In response to the question, "Have you visited with a mechanic or shop manager about opportunities for employment in the mechanics trade?" only 102 or 26.6 percent indicated that they had. Almost three-fourths had not, as shown in Table 12a.

When school size was considered, Table 12b shows little difference existed among responses. The smallest percentage that had participated in this activity was in the largest schools; this is the opposite of what would be expected in terms of probable resources available.

Table 12a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Visited with Shop Manager or Mechanic about Employment in the Mechanics Trade.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 102 | 26.6 |
| No | 281 | 73.4 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 12b. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Visited with Shop Manager or Mechanic about Employment in the Mechanics Trade by School Size.

| Response | School Size: Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 35 | 28.7 | 39 | 31.0 | 28 | 20.8 | 102 | 26.6 |
| No | 87 | 71.3 | 87 | 69.0 | 107 | 79.2 | 281 | 73.4 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 126 | 100.0 | 135 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

The "teacher" was identified most frequently as the person who had encouraged respondents to make such a visit, as shown in Table 12c. It is assumed that this person was the pre-employment laboratory teacher; however, other teachers may have been involved. Parent was mentioned in 13.9 percent of the cases and the counselor only 5.1 percent. It may be noted that 21 or 20.2 percent did such a visit on their own initiative. In the "other" category, friends and mechanics were mentioned.

Table 12c. Persons Who Encouraged Respondents to Visit with Shop Manager or Mechanic about Employment in the Mechanics Trade.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher | 43 | 41.8 |
| No one (my own initiative) | 21 | 20.2 |
| Parent | 14 | 13.9 |
| Counselor | 5 | 5.1 |
| Other | 19 | 19.0 |
| Total | 102 | 100.0 |

Special Instructions on Interviews

In response to the question, "Have you had any special instructions on what to do or say when being interviewed for a job by a prospective employer?" 148 or 38.7 percent responded affirmatively while 235 or 61.3 percent gave a negative reply, as shown in Table 13a. When school size was considered, the smallest schools had the smallest percentage, as shown in Table 13b, with the 250-500 and the 500 and up schools with much higher percentages.

Table 13c shows that the pre-employment laboratory teacher provided almost 82 percent of the instruction on what to do or say during interviews. The counselor was given credit by only 5.2 percent of the respondents while 13.1 percent of the responses were classified in the "other" category which included parent, friend, uncle and businessman.

Table 13a. Number and Percent of Respondents Having Special Instructions about What to Do or Say When Being Interviewed for a Job by a Prospective Employer.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 148 | 38.7 |
| No | 235 | 61.3 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 13b. Number and Percent of Respondents Having Special Instructions about What to Do or Say When Being Interviewed for a Job by a Prospective Employer by School Size.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 30 | 24.6 | 56 | 43.4 | 62 | 47.0 | 148 | 38.7 |
| No | 92 | 75.4 | 73 | 56.6 | 70 | 53.0 | 235 | 61.3 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 129 | 100.0 | 132 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 13c. Persons Providing Instruction to Respondents about What to Do or Say When Being Interviewed for a Job by a Prospective Employer.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-employment lab teacher | 121 | 81.7 |
| Counselor | 8 | 5.2 |
| Other | 19 | 13.1 |
| Total | 148 | 100.0 |

Writing Letters of Application

In response to the question, "Have you had any special instructions on how to write letters of application for a job?" 195 or 51.0 percent responded affirmatively and 188 or 49.0 percent gave a negative response, as shown in Table 14a. When school size was considered, the smallest schools had given the least instruction percentage-wise, as shown in Table 14b, with the two other sizes of schools showing a higher percentage of positive responses.

Table 14a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Special Instructions about How to Write a Letter of Application for a Job.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 195 | 51.0 |
| No | 188 | 49.0 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 14b. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Special Instructions about How to Write a Letter of Application for a Job by School Size.

| Response | School Size: Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 54 | 43.9 | 64 | 49.6 | 77 | 58.8 | 195 | 51.0 |
| No | 69 | 56.1 | 65 | 50.4 | 54 | 41.2 | 188 | 49.0 |
| Total | 123 | 100.0 | 129 | 100.0 | 131 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Teachers were most frequently identified as providing this instruction, as shown in Table 14c. These were almost equally distributed among those that teach English, typing, business and vocational agriculture. Five respondents had instruction from parents and four identified the counselor as the person who had provided such instruction.

Table 14c. Person Providing Instructions for Respondents about How to Write a Letter of Application for a Job.

| Person | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers | 185 | 94.6 |
| Parent | 5 | 2.7 |
| Counselor | 4 | 2.2 |
| Other | 1 | 0.5 |
| Total | 195 | 100.0 |

Information About Schools Where Additional Training is Available

In response to the question, "Have you received any information about schools where you can get additional training in mechanics after graduation from high school?" 240 or 62.7 percent had been provided this information, as shown in Table 15a. It is evident that school size was not associated with whether students were provided with information about where additional training in mechanics would be available after graduation from high school, as shown in Table 15b.

Table 15a. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Received Information about Schools Where Additional Training Would be Available After Graduation from High School.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 240 | 62.7 |
| No | 143 | 37.3 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

Teachers were the main source of this information, as shown in Table 15c, followed by the counselor and a trade school representative. In the other" category, respondents identified the mail, fellow students and parents. It may be noted that school personnel were identified directly by 68.3 percent. No doubt, trade school representatives were invited by school personnel to provide information about mechanical training programs; therefore, it seems evident that high schools provided, either directly or indirectly, almost 95 percent of the information about sources of advanced training programs in mechanics.

Table 15b. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Had Received Information about Schools Where Additional Training Would be Available After Graduation from High School by School Size.

| Response | School Size: Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Yes | 76 | 62.3 | 78 | 61.9 | 86 | 63.7 | 240 | 62.7 |
| No | 46 | 37.7 | 48 | 38.1 | 49 | 36.3 | 143 | 37.3 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 126 | 100.0 | 135 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |

Table 15c. Source of Information Received by Respondents about Schools Where Additional Training in Mechanics Would Be Available.

| Source | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers | 90 | 37.3 |
| Counselor | 75 | 31.0 |
| Trade school representative | 62 | 26.1 |
| Other | 13 | 5.6 |
| Total | 240 | 100.0 |

Plans of Respondents Upon Graduation From High School

In response to the question, "What are your plans when you graduate from high school?" the highest percentage, 34.4, planned to enter college, as shown in Table 16. The next highest group, 18.3 percent, however, had no definite plans. Slightly more than 15 percent planned to enter a vocational-technical school; it is not known if the course of study to be followed was mechanics, however. Only 14.4 percent planned to enter a trade.

Table 16. Plans of Respondents upon Graduation from High School.

| Plan | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Enter college | 132 | 34.4 |
| No definite plan | 70 | 18.3 |
| Enter vocational-technical school | 58 | 15.3 |
| Enter a trade | 55 | 14.4 |
| Enter military service | 35 | 9.1 |
| Take any job available | 26 | 6.8 |
| Other | 7 | 1.7 |
| Total | 383 | 100.0 |

When respondents were asked to identify the trade they planned to enter, almost 50 percent identified mechanics, as shown in Table 17. There was, however, a wide array of other trades identified such as welding, electronics, machinist, and the like. The mention of medicine by a few seems to suggest that some respondents had not made a clear distinction between a trade and a profession.

Table 17. Occupational Goals of Respondents Who Plan to Enter a Trade Upon Graduation from High School.

| Occupational Goal | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Mechanic | 26 | 49.5 |
| Welder | 5 | 9.9 |
| Agriculture | 3 | 5.5 |
| Machinist | 3 | 4.4 |
| Electronics | 3 | 4.4 |
| Medicine | 3 | 4.4 |
| Art | 2 | 3.3 |
| Carpenter | 1 | 2.2 |
| Other | 9 | 16.4 |
| Total | 55 | 100.0 |

Of those that planned to enter a vocational-technical school, a majority planned to study mechanics, followed by agriculture, welding and electronics, as shown in Table 18a. Other areas mentioned by at least two respondents were computer science and machinist. This group had, evidently, selected occupations that are normally learned in vocational-technical schools.

In response to the question, "Do you know where a vocational-technical school is located that will give you the kind of training you want?" 42 or 72.3 percent responded in the affirmative. Sixteen or 27.7 percent gave a negative response, as shown in Table 18b. It may be noted that 58 indicated they planned to enter a vocational-technical school, but 16 responded that they did not know the location of a vocational school that would help them achieve their career goal. Some respondents may have misinterpreted this question. On the other hand, however, it seems likely that many failed to make the distinction between a college and a vocational-technical school.

Table 18a. Fields of Study of Respondents Who Plan to Enter a Vocational-Technical School Upon Graduation from High School.

| Occupational Goal | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Mechanic | 34 | 58.1 |
| Agriculture | 7 | 11.6 |
| Welding | 6 | 10.5 |
| Electronics | 6 | 10.5 |
| Machinist | 1 | 2.3 |
| Computer | 1 | 2.3 |
| Other | 3 | 4.7 |
| Total | 58 | 100.0 |

Table 18b. Number and Percent of Respondents Who Knew the Location of a Vocational-Technical School That Would Provide the Training Needed to Enable Them to Achieve Their Career Goal.

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 42 | 72.3 |
| No | 16 | 27.7 |
| Total | 58 | 100.0 |

Respondents who planned to enter college were asked to identify their professional goals. The most frequently mentioned goal was mechanics followed closely by agriculture and business, as shown in Table 19. Other professional goals mentioned were veterinary medicine, electronics, law, computer science, welding, teacher, etc. The list lends further evidence to the conclusion that many respondents had made little distinction between a trade and a profession, or what a person may study in college or a vocational-technical school.

Table 19. Professional Goals of Respondents Who Plan to Enter College Upon Graduation from High School.

| Professional Goal | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Mechanics | 27 | 20.7 |
| Agriculture | 21 | 15.5 |
| Business | 16 | 12.1 |
| Veterinarian | 8 | 6.0 |
| Electronics | 7 | 5.2 |
| Computer | 7 | 5.2 |
| Law | 7 | 5.2 |
| Physical education | 6 | 4.3 |
| Welder | 4 | 3.4 |
| Wildlife | 4 | 3.4 |
| Teacher | 3 | 2.6 |
| Other | 22 | 16.4 |
| Total | 132 | 100.0 |

Degree to Which Schools Were Helpful in Assisting Respondents in Choosing a Career

In response to the question, "How well do you think your school has helped you in choosing a career?" 115 or 30 percent gave the school credit for being very helpful. It may be observed from Table 20a that a majority rated their school in the range of from some help to very helpful. When weights were assigned to responses with an undecided at a one (1) level, the mean was 3.6 or slightly above the midpoint between some help and almost no help.

Table 20a. The Extent Respondents Thought Their School Had Helped Them in Choosing a Career. Shown by Number and Percent and by Mean Weighted Score.

| Extent of Help | Weight | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very helpful | (5) | 115 | 30.0 |
| Some help | (4) | 149 | 38.9 |
| Almost no help | (3) | 24 | 6.3 |
| No help at all | (4) | 45 | 11.7 |
| Undecided | (1) | 50 | 13.1 |
| | Total | 383 | 100.0 |
| Mean Weighted Score | | 3.6 | |

When responses were considered on the basis of school size, it may be observed from Table 20b that students in the 500 and up school size rated the helpfulness of their school slightly lower than either of the other two sizes. The 250 and less and the 250-500 size rated their school at the same level, 3.7.

Table 20b. Helpfulness of Schools in Assisting Students Choose a Career by School Size, Showing Number, Percent and Mean Weighted Score.

| Response | School Size | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Very helpful | 32 | 26.4 | 41 | 31.8 | 42 | 31.6 | 115 | 30.0 |
| Some help | 56 | 46.3 | 49 | 38.0 | 43 | 32.3 | 148 | 38.6 |
| Almost no help | 5 | 4.1 | 11 | 8.5 | 8 | 6.1 | 24 | 6.3 |
| No help at all | 16 | 13.2 | 12 | 9.3 | 16 | 12.0 | 44 | 11.5 |
| Undecided | 12 | 10.0 | 16 | 12.4 | 24 | 18.0 | 52 | 13.6 |
| Total | 121 | 100.0 | 129 | 100.0 | 133 | 100.0 | 383 | 100.0 |
| Mean Weighted Score | 3.7 | | 3.7 | | 3.5 | | 3.6 | |

The basis used by respondents to evaluate their schools is not known because this research made no attempt to determine the basis on which students evaluate the degree to which schools help students select careers.

How Schools Could Have Been More Helpful in Assisting Students in Making Career Choices

In response to the question, "How do you think your school could have been more helpful to you in choosing a career?" 77 or 27.9 percent of the 276 students responding suggested more vocational courses, as shown in Table 21a. Field trips to places of employment, more vocational counseling and more occupational information were identified in descending order with 21.0, 18.8 and 14.9 percent, respectively.

Table 21a. Suggestions Made by Respondents About How Their Schools Could Have Been More Helpful in Assisting Them in Making Career Choices.

| Suggestions | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Offer more vocational courses | 77 | 27.9 |
| Field trips to places of employment | 58 | 21.0 |
| More vocational counseling | 52 | 18.8 |
| More occupational information | 41 | 14.9 |
| More and better equipment | 18 | 6.5 |
| Other | 20 | 7.3 |
| Nothing to improve | 10 | 3.6 |
| Total | 276 | 100.0 |

When suggestions were considered on the basis of school size, it may be observed in Table 21b that the percentage of students suggesting more vocational counseling was highest in the smallest school group.

Table 21b. Suggestions Made by Respondents About How Their Schools Could Have Been More Helpful in Assisting Them in Making Career Choices by School Size.

| Suggestions | School Size | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less than 250 | | 250-500 | | Over 500 | | Total | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Offer more vocational courses | 22 | 22.4 | 25 | 26.3 | 30 | 35.3 | 77 | 28.0 |
| Field trips | 19 | 19.4 | 23 | 24.2 | 16 | 18.8 | 58 | 21.0 |
| More vocational counseling | 25 | 25.5 | 14 | 14.7 | 13 | 15.3 | 52 | 18.8 |
| More occupational information | 11 | 11.2 | 15 | 15.8 | 15 | 17.6 | 41 | 14.9 |
| More and better equipment | 8 | 8.2 | 9 | 9.5 | 1 | 1.2 | 18 | 6.5 |
| Other | 5 | 5.1 | 5 | 5.3 | 10 | 11.8 | 20 | 7.2 |
| Nothing to improve | 8 | 8.2 | 2 | 4.2 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 3.6 |
| Total | 98 | 100.0 | 93 | 100.0 | 85 | 100.0 | 276 | 100.0 |

## Summary of Major Findings

1. The majority of the students surveyed had enrolled in the pre-employment laboratory program without having being influenced by anyone in particular.

2. Only 34.5 percent of the students indicated that they had taken an interest inventory or aptitude test and only 14.7 percent indicated that someone had counseled with them about their test scores.

3. Only a small percentage of the students (approximately 15 percent) had worked either part-time or during the summer as a mechanic or as a mechanics helper, and of those who had worked, only a few credited school personnel with helping them obtain such employment.

4. Slightly over half (55.3 percent) of the students had read books, bulletins or other literature about the mechanics trade, and the teacher was identified as the major supplier of such literature.

5. Less than half (44.4 percent) of the students had viewed motion pictures, filmstrips or other visuals that would help them understand opportunities available in the mechanics trade, and the teacher was identified as the person responsible in almost 80 percent of the cases.

6. Less than one-third (28.5 percent) of the students had been in a class where employers discussed such matters as what employers expect of employees. The class most frequently identified as sponsoring such discussions was the pre-employment laboratory class.

7. Only one-third of the students had been in a class that took a field trip to a business for the purpose of helping them make a career choice. The pre-employment laboratory class was the only one identified specifically as having sponsored such a trip.

8. Only about one-fourth of the students had visited with a mechanic or shop manager about opportunities for employment in the mechanics trade. The teacher was most frequently mentioned as the person who had encouraged such visits.

9. Special instructions on what to do or say when being interviewed for a job by a prospective employer had been received by 38.7 percent of the students, and the pre-employment laboratory teacher provided almost 82 percent of such instruction.

10. About one-half of the students had received special instructions on how to write letters of application for a job, and teachers were most frequently identified as providing this instruction.

11. Almost two-thirds of the students had received information about schools where they could get additional training in mechanics after graduation from high school. Teachers, counselors, and trade school representatives, in that order, were most often identified as the providers of the information.

12. Over one-third of the students, (34.4 percent), planned to enter college upon graduation from high school. The next highest group, (18.3 percent), had no definite plans. About 15 percent planned to enter a vocational-technical school, and only 14.4 percent planned to enter a trade immediately upon graduation from high school.

13. Of those who expected to enter a trade upon graduation from high school, almost 50 percent identified mechanics as the trade they planned to enter. A wide array of other trades were also mentioned, such as welding, machinist, and electronics.

14. Of those who planned to enter a vocational-technical school, a majority planned to study mechanics, followed by agriculture, welding and electronics. Almost three-fourths of the students who planned to enter a vocational-technical school knew where a school was located where they could get the kind of training they wanted.

15. For the students who planned to enter college, the most frequently mentioned professional goal was mechanics, followed closely by agriculture and business. Numerous other professional goals were mentioned, including veterinary medicine, electronics, law, computer science, welding and teaching.

16. The mean weighted rating given by students as to how helpful the school had been in helping them choose a career was slightly above the midpoint between "some help" and "almost no help."

17. Suggestions most often offered by students as to how the schools could have been more helpful in assisting them to choose a career were, in descending order, "offer more vocational courses," "field trips to places of employment," "more vocational counseling," "more occupational information," and "more and better equipment."

18. In general, no relationship existed between school size and the career guidance services in which students participated.

## Implications

1. A more systematic program is needed to orient students to the vocational education programs offered in school.

2. A more comprehensive testing program, including tests designed specifically to assist students in career planning, is needed in schools, and students should be counseled with about their test results.

3. The school should make a greater effort to assist students in finding part-time or summer employment to enhance their career development.

4. A greater effort should be made in securing and disseminating occupational information to students through a variety of sources and types of media.

5. Students should be provided with greater opportunities for on-site observation of business and industry through school-planned activities.

6. Special instructions and exercises in job interviewing and in preparing job applications should be provided more systematically by the school.

7. Students should be provided with greater assistance in making appropriate plans beyond high school in accordance with their career goals.

8. Since teachers were most often identified as the persons providing career guidance, the active involvement of all teachers in career guidance should be encouraged. Counselors should provide more leadership and consultation to enhance the effectiveness of the guidance role of teachers.